

From Cromer  
5 April 1973

1. 'Sir Alec Douglas-Home is very grateful to Dr Kissinger for the sight of the records of the discussions with Mr Hafiz Ismail in Washington. His comments on the records are as follows.
2. Ismail spoke on broadly the same lines in Washington as he did in London, although for obvious tactical reasons he adopted a less negative tone in Washington. It would be interesting to know whether, and with what emphasis he made the same basic point in Washington as he did in London, namely that the process of working towards a settlement would not begin until there had been a change (to an "impartial position") in the US attitude.
3. On detailed points, Ismail was not specific to us on the question of normalisation of relations with Israel, although everything that he said in Washington was in the spirit of conversations we have had with the Egyptians over the past two years. As we see it, what Ismail said represents a marginal advance on the Egyptian position as understood by us. They have always said to us that they would be prepared to normalise relations with Israel following a comprehensive settlement but that they would have to allow time for emotions to cool before e.g. exchanging Embassies. Ismail now appears to be saying that the process of normalisation could begin at an advanced stage in the negotiations, i.e. before the actual conclusion of a comprehensive settlement. But we doubt whether this change in attitude is more than cosmetic.
4. Ismail was also more explicit in Washington about the relationship between an Egypt/Israel Agreement and agreement on the remaining problems. But what he said fits in with one remark he made to us. This was that the only type of interim arrangement which Egypt could contemplate would be full agreement on the totality of the Egypt/Israel sector as the first phase in the whole package which must of course be agreed in toto in advance of implementation of each phase. This also fits in with his remark in Washington that the ideas represented in the interim settlement approach could be used as the opening phase of a broader process.
5. On Jordan Ismail made clear in London that the Egyptians were not worried about Hussain negotiating rectifications of the old Jordan/Israel ceasefire line but he did not go so far as to suggest that Egypt could accept a security corridor down the Jordan River.
6. Gaza was not discussed with Ismail in London. His ideas are interesting. But we have never thought that Gaza would present a serious problem once momentum toward agreement on the more difficult sectors had got under way.

ON-FILE NSC  
RELEASE  
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

7. In his conversations in London Ismail made much of the question of international guarantees in Sinai and the need for a refugee settlement. We have done a lot of work on these two questions and are at present updating papers prepared a year or two ago. We should be glad to give Dr Kissinger copies, if he would like them.